

REMARKS/DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

The Office Action allows claims 11 and 20, and indicates that claims 8, 13, 14, 16 and 18 define patentable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all features of their respective base claims and any intervening dependent claims. Without acquiescing to the basis for the claim rejections of any of the pending claims, in order to expedite prosecution and put this application in condition for allowance, by this Amendment Applicants amend claims 1 and 7 to incorporate the subject matter of claims 14 and 8, respectively, and cancel claims 8 and 14.

Accordingly, claims 1-7, 9-13 and 15-20 are now pending in this patent application.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 7 – corresponding to previously-pending claims 14 and 8, respectively – are now in condition for allowance. As claims 2-6, 9-12, 13 and 15-20 depend variously from claims 1, 7 and 11, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also now all in condition for allowance. Therefore, the various rejections of dependent claims 2-6, 9, 10 and 17 are deemed moot and Applicants believe that there is no need to address them any further at this time.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that there are no further issues remaining in regard to this patent application.

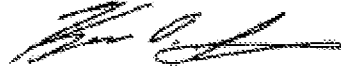
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing explanations, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and reexamine the present application, allow claims 1-7, 9-13 and 15-20 and pass the application to issue. In the event that there are any outstanding matters remaining in the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact Kenneth D. Springer (Reg. No. 39,843) at (571) 283.0720 to discuss these

matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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